

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 3106

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TAGS: PINS, PFOR, RP, MY, ID, SA

SUBJ: AP STORIES ON PHILIPPINE-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS

REF: STATE 051188

FOLLOWING TEXT OF AP TICKER ITEMS:

1. MOSLEMS (URGENT FOR KL) BY ARNOLD ZEITLIN
MANILA (AP) -- THE PHILIPPINES HAS INFORMED MALAYSIA
IT HAS CAPTURED IN MINDANAO FILIPINO MOSLEMS WHO CLAIMED
THEY WERE TRAINED IN MALAYSIA TO FIGHT IN THE SOUTH FOR
SECESSION FROM THE MANILA GOVERNMENT, AUTHORITATIVELY
INFORMED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID SUNDAY.

THE SIGNED STATEMENTS OF THE CAPTIVES, WHOSE NAMES
WERE NOT DISCLOSED, AND OTHER INFORMATION THE PHILIPPINES
CLAIMED SHOWED MALAYSIA'S (QUOTE) DEEP INVOLVEMENT (UNQUOTE)
IN SUPPLYING ARMS AND AMMUNITION TO MOSLEM INSURGENTS IN
MINDANAO AND SULU WERE SHOWN TO VISITING SAUDI ARABIAN
FOREIGN MINISTER OMAR SAKKAF, THE SOURCE SAID.

THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL COMMENT ON THE REPORTS FROM THE
PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT OR THE PART OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER,
WHO WAS SCHEDULED TO FLY MONDAY TO DEVASTATED JOLO ON THE
FOURTH DAY OF HIS OFFICIAL VISIT HERE.

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THE SOURCES SAID THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS BRIEFED AFTER PRESIDENT FERDINAND E. MARCOS IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT SAID HE WANTED TO (QUOTE) EXHAUST ALL EFFORTS (UNQUOTE) TO USE DIPLOMACY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS BUT WARNED (QUOTE) ANYONE WHO SEEKS TO DESTROY THE TERRITORY OF OUR COUNTRY (UNQUOTE).

ACCORDING TO THE SOURCES, WHO DID NOT WISH TO BE IDENTIFIED, BEFORE SAKKAF'S ARRIVAL, FOREIGN SECRETARY CARLOS P. ROMULO SUMMONED THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR, DATUK AHMAD ZAINUL ABIDIN BIN MOHHAMED YUSUF, TO INFORM HIM OF THE PHILIPPINE CONTENTION.

A MALAYSIAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL CONFIRMED THE MEETING. HE SAID AMBASSADOR YUSUF SAID MALAYSIA HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR REBELS FIGHTING IN THE MOSLEM SOUTH AND SUGGESTED IF THE PHILIPPINE EVIDENCE HAD SUBSTANCE, IT BE MADE PUBLIC.

THE OFFICIAL SAID A SIMILAR MEETING WAS HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR AND THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE SET THE STAGE FOR THE BITTEREST CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORING ISLAND REPUBLICS SINCE THEY CLASHED IN 1968-69 OVER THE PHILIPPINE'S CLAIM TO SABAH, A MALAYSIAN STATE WHICH PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN THE NEW CONFLICT.

RELIABLE SOURCES WHO HAVE SOME OF THE PHILIPPINE MATERIAL SAID THE GOVERNMENT CONCLUDED (QUOTE) MALAYSIA HAS SUPPORTED THE OBJECTIVE OF ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT STATE COMPRISED OF MINDANAO, SULU AND PALAWAN. (UNQUOTE)

IT ACCUSED MALAYSIA OF SUPPORTING THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF), THE MOSLEM INSURGENT GROUP CREDITED WITH THE COUNTERATTACK FEB. 7 WHICH BEGAN THE DEVASTATION OF JOLO, THE CAPITAL OF THE SULU ISLANDS, 600 MILES SOUTH OF MANILA AND THE CLOSEST PART OF THE PHILIPPINES TO SABAH.

(QUOTE) MALAYSIA'S DEEP INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONFLICT IN UNCLASSIFIED

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THE MINDANAO-SULU AREA CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS THREAT TO PHILIPPINE NATIONAL SECURITY (UNQUOTE), THE PHILIPPINE ASSESSMENT REPORTEDLY READ, (QUOTE) AND AN AFFRONT TO ITS NATIONAL INTEGRITY (UNQUOTE).

ACCORDING TO THE SOURCES, THE PHILIPPINE CASE CLAIMED THE FOLLOWING:

1. STARTING WITH A TOTAL OF 90 MEN IN FIVE BATCHES IN EARLY 1969, MALAYSIA PROVIDED GUERRILLA TRAINING TO MOSLEMS FROM MINDANAO AND SULU AT PULAO PANGHOR, AN ISLAND OFF LUMOT ABOUT 12 HOURS OVERLAND FROM THDEKUALA LUMPUR AIRPORT. AMONG THEM WAS NURUL HADJI MISWARI, A MOSLEM FORMER UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES POLITICAL SCIENTIST WHO THE GOVERNMENT HERE CLAIMS IS CHAIRMAN OF THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. OTHER TRAINING AREAS WERE LAHAD DATU AND BANGUEY ISLAND, SABAH. THE CAPTURED MOSLEMS WERE IN PHILIPPINE CUSTODY.

2. DURING THE COURSE OF AT LEAST 58 LANDINGS SINCE DECEMBER 1972, MOSLEM REBELS IN THE PHILIPPINES RECEIVED FROM MALAYSIAN SOURCES AT LEAST 200,000 ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION AND 5,407 WEAPONS, RANGING FROM HAND GRENADES TO MACHINEGUNS, ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS AND A 52-INCH TUBE-LIKE DEVICE FIRING AMMUNITION 30 INCHES LONG. ACCORDING TO THE MATERIAL IN POSSESSION OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE LAS WAS DELIVERED BY TWO MALAYSIAN NAVAL BOATS DEC. 31 LAST.

3. ACCORDING TO AN INTERCEPTED LETTER DATED JUNE 3, 1972, FROM A FORMER MOSLEM FILIPINO CONGRESSMAN, RASCID LUCMAN, SABAH CHIEF MINISTER TUN MUSTAPHA PROVIDED 750,000 PESOS, OR 112,500 U.S. DOLLARS, TO MISWARI AND TO DR. SALEH LOONG. THE DOCTOR IS A CAIRO-TRAINED FILIPINO PHYSICIAN WHOSE RELATIVES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN MINDANAO AND SULU AS REBEL LEADERS. THE MONEY WAS TO RECRUIT 300 YOUNG MOSLEM MEN FOR GUERRILLA WARFARE. MUSTAPHA IS A NATIVE OF THE SULU ISLAND GROUP.

ALTHOUGH ACCUSATIONS OF MALAYSIAN SUPPORT FOR THE MINDANAO AND SULU REBELS HAVE APPEARED IN THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS, THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL, PUBLIC COMPLAINT.

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RELIABLY INFORMED DIPLOMATS SAID THE PHILIPPINES HESITATED AGAINST MAKING A PUBLIC STATEMENT LAST AUGUST BEFORE THE ARRIVAL HERE OF A FOUR-MAN COMMITTEE OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE TO TOUR MOSLEM AREAS IN THE SOUTH. THE SOURCES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO AVOID STRAINING RELATIONS AMONG THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) TO WHICH BOTH MALAYSIA AND THE PHILIPPINES BELONG.

THE SOURCES CLAIMED THE MALAYSIANS WERE EXTENDING SUPPORT TO THE REBELS TO PRESSURE THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO DROP ITS CLAIM ON SABAH, WHICH WAS BASED ON TREATIES BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE OLD SULU SULTANATE.

MALAYSIAN SOURCES SAY THE PHILIPPINES HAD TRIED TO

INTERFERE IN SABAH WITH A MOSLEM ARMED FORCE TRAINED IN
CORREGIDOR AND CODENAMED JABIDA. THE PROJECT BECAME A
DOMESTIC SCANDAL IN 1968. (END) ZEITLIN MANILA MARCH 10

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1905

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2. MALAYSIA-FILIPINO MOSLEMS

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA (AP) - MALAYSIA HAS NOT RECEIVED
ANY OFFICIAL CHARGES FROM THE PHILIPPINES THAT MALAYSIA IS
SUPPORTING MOSLEM REBELS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES WITH
TRAINING, ARMS AND MONEY, A FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN
SAID MONDAY.

THE SPOKESMAN WAS COMMENTING ON REPORTS FROM MANILA
THAT PHILIPPINES FOREIGN SECRETARY CARLOS P. ROMULO HAD
SUMMONED MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR AHMAD ZAINAL ABIDIN AND MADE
THE ALLEGATIONS TO HIM.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID ROMULO AND THE AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED
OTHER MATTERS AND THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION BY
ROMULO OR OTHERS ALLEGING MALAYSIAN SUPPORT FOR THE REBELS.

MALQSIA IS (QUOTE) CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION
(UNQUOTE) IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, WHERE GOVERNMENT
FORCES HAVE BEEN FIGHTING MOSLEM REBELS, BECAUSE ABOUT
7,000 REFUGEES HAVE COME TO THE MALAYSIAN STATE OF SABAH
SINCE FIGHTING ERUPTED IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES TOWN OF
JOLO EARLY LAST MONTH, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

BUT, HE STRESSED, (QUOTE) WE HAVE CLOSE RELATIONS
WITH THE PHILIPPINES AND WE VALUE THE RELATIONS (UNQUOTE).
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COMMENTING ON THE MANILA REPORT QUOTING RELIABLE SOURCES
AS SAYING MALAYSIA WANTED TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT STATE
COMPRISED OF THE PHILIPPINES ISLANDS OF MINDANAO, SULU AND
PALAWAN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID MALAYSIA (QUOTE) RESPECTS THE
PHILIPPINES TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY (UNQUOTE) AND INTEGRITY.

PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR JOSE EVANGELISTA SAID HE HAS
NOT HAD ANY MEETINGS WITH THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT ON THE
MOSLEM PROBLEM SINCE HE WAS ASKED FOR A BRIEFING ON THE
SITUATION BY MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER TUN ABDUL RAZAK LAST
MONTH.

THE MANILA REPORT SAID MALAYSIA HAD TRAINED REBELS AND
SENT THEM TO THE PHILIPPINES. IT SAID MALAYSIA HAD GIVEN
THE REBELS 200,000 ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION AND 5,407 WEAPONS
INCLUDING ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS SINCE DECEMBER 1972.

THE MALAYSIAN LEADERS ALSO HAD GIVEN THE REBELS MONEY,
THE REPORT SAID.

THE MALAYSIAN SPOKESMAN SAID ALL MALAYSIAN LEADERS RES-
PECTED THE MALAYSIAN FOREIGN POLICY. (END) MANIAM MARCH 11
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